

# West Lafayette Parks and Recreation

## 2012 Highlights

### “The Heat Was On”:

The warmest year on record affected local parks and recreation endeavors throughout the year. Heat, drought, Hurricane Isaac, and more heat led to closing the ice rink early at the end of February, devoting an exceptional amount of time to watering new plantings during the summer, cancelling Global Fest due to public safety concerns, and delaying reopening the rink until mid-December.

### Paula R. Woods Park:

Dozens of family members and friends enjoyed the Paula R. Woods Park dedication in July. The park at Lawn and Vine was renamed as a memorial to Paula, a long-term neighborhood resident and former Park Board Member. A new bench in memory of Paula’s husband Ron, an ADA compliant and pet friendly water fountain, and landscape plantings were also added to the park.

### On the Trails:

West Lafayette’s part of the Wabash Heritage Trail network was completed. New trail was constructed along North River Road and through Happy Hollow Park to Rose Street, as well as to the existing trail segment connecting with Indian Trail Drive. Several Happy Hollow Park improvements were made in conjunction with the trail construction project. New trail was also constructed in Tapawingo Park to connect the trail through the park with the existing trail segment along Tapawingo Drive South (to South River Road).

New trailhead and interpretive signs will be installed along West Lafayette’s four-mile part of the Wabash Heritage Trail network. Trail Assessment Information “strips” will also be added to the trailhead signs to make it easier for everyone to access and use the trail; this will be a first for any trail in Indiana. An event commemorating completion of the Wabash Heritage Trail in West Lafayette is being planned for spring.

New trail segments were also constructed along Yeager Road and Cumberland Avenue as part of road renovation projects. Reconstruction of the Ravine Footpath, between Salisbury Street and the Wabash Heritage Trail in Happy Hollow Park, also got underway, and work will continue through 2013. There are now nearly 19 miles of paved trails and more than five miles of footpaths for community use and enjoyment.

## Fun and Fitness:

More than 2,100 youngsters participated in recreation programs: basketball, soccer, volleyball, and tennis camps; swimming and diving lessons at the Municipal Pool; the Playground Program; and grade school basketball. Thanks to the West Lafayette Community School Corporation for the continuing use of their facilities for many activities.

Twenty-eight co-ed and nine men's teams competed in the Recreational Softball Leagues, and many senior softball players had fun in their weekly, pick-up games.

## At the Community Center:

A total of 3,950 people registered for Morton Community Center programs and classes. Registrations increased 7.6% relative to the year before. In addition, many senior bridge players, euchre players, and Wabash Area Lifetime Learning Association participants continue to call Morton "home." The WALLA classes had a record 238 people participating in the fall session.

Congratulations to all the young dancers and their instructors, families, and friends on another very successful Morton Spring Dance Recital.

Even though Global Fest was "washed out" by hurricane remnants, the annual Naturalization Ceremony scheduled prior to the festival was moved inside to conduct the ceremony for approximately 80 new citizens and their families and friends.

New controls were installed to help improve operation and maintenance of the heating, cooling, and ventilation units in the Morton rooms.

## Riverside:

Riverside Skating Center is in the middle of its 11<sup>th</sup> season. During the 2011-12 winter season, 14,470 people enjoyed skating at the ice rink. The public skating sessions, skating lessons, and special events at the rink continue to provide unique, outdoor, wintertime recreation opportunities for the community.

The Art on the Wabash event in Tapawingo Park was enjoyed by 34 local artists and hundreds of people appreciating and purchasing works of art on a perfect-weather-day in September. Tapawingo Park was also enjoyed by thousands of people during the Taste of Tippecanoe, Stars and Stripes, River Fest, and Dancing in the Streets community events in June and July.

A \$2,000 grant from the Wabash River Enhancement Corporation provided approximately 75% of the costs for native vegetation plantings installed for streambank stabilization in Happy Hollow Park.

### In the Nature Area:

Several thousand visitors from many states and a few foreign countries were able to again enjoy visiting Lilly Nature Center throughout the year (and the new Lindberg Road Bridge and Celery Bog Nature Area entry constructed the previous year were much appreciated). The popular “Wednesdays in the Wild” programs and the Sycamore Audubon Society and Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society meetings provided many informative nature presentations for the public.

A Celery Bog webcam was installed in the Nature Center. It may be operated and viewed on-site or remotely through the web by entering [bogcam1.westlafayette.in.gov](http://bogcam1.westlafayette.in.gov) as the address in a browser (and by entering public for both the user name and for the password).

“MindBOGgling” was enjoyed by several hundred people in May. The celebration of the Nature Area was sponsored by the Friends of Celery Bog, in cooperation with the West Lafayette and Tippecanoe County Parks and Recreation Departments, and the Indiana Native Plant & Wildflower Society, Sycamore Audubon Society, and Tippecanoe County Master Gardeners.

The Nature Area received recognition by the National Wildlife Federation as a Certified Wildlife Habitat.

### Special Recognition and Thanks:

Sincere thanks and congratulations to the many people who were so instrumental in making our community a special place throughout the year:

The many volunteers (trained as Master Naturalists) who provide at least 95% of the staffing for Lilly Nature Center;

The Tree Fund committee for providing 930 hours improving West Lafayette’s urban forest this year - 516 street trees were planted (and watered), 1,292 trees were pruned, and the City was again recognized as a Tree City USA;

The citizens who contributed more than \$15,000 to support the efforts of the Tree Fund committee;

The Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society RIP (remove invasive plants) Squad for their on-going valuable work in our parks;

The many, hard-working Adopt-a-Spot sponsors who help make community thoroughfares more attractive and enjoyable;

The Sagamore West Farmers' Market vendors and workers for making the eighth year of the market a success and a community gathering place;

The Master Gardener Association and Purdue Extension for managing the Community Gardens in Cumberland Park to provide plots for local vegetable gardeners;

The Chauncey Cooperative young men for adopting Tommy Johnston Park to help keep it clean and attractive;

The approximately 100 volunteers who helped with the Detrash the Wabash event;

The Purdue Communications class that designed, produced, and provided 15 new educational posters for the information kiosks along the trails network;

The Starbuck's store managers from Boone, Hamilton, Marion, and Tippecanoe Counties for helping plant 40 shrubs in Celery Bog Nature Area;

The youngsters and staff from Burgett's Learning Center for helping plant 12 trees near the entrance to Celery Bog Nature Area to celebrate Arbor Day;

The 11 young men from the national Sigma Chi fraternity meeting in West Lafayette for repainting the shelter by the Happy Hollow Park playground; and

The Alpha Tau Omega fraternity for weeding and litter removal at the Police Station on Earth Day.